

Merging academic libraries: An opportunity for a face-lift?

Nancy Durieux

Life Sciences Library
University of Liège, Belgium

Don't you find your library a little wrinkled ?

Have you ever thought of changing your
management style ?

Merging academic libraries:
An opportunity for a face-lift?

Context and Objectives

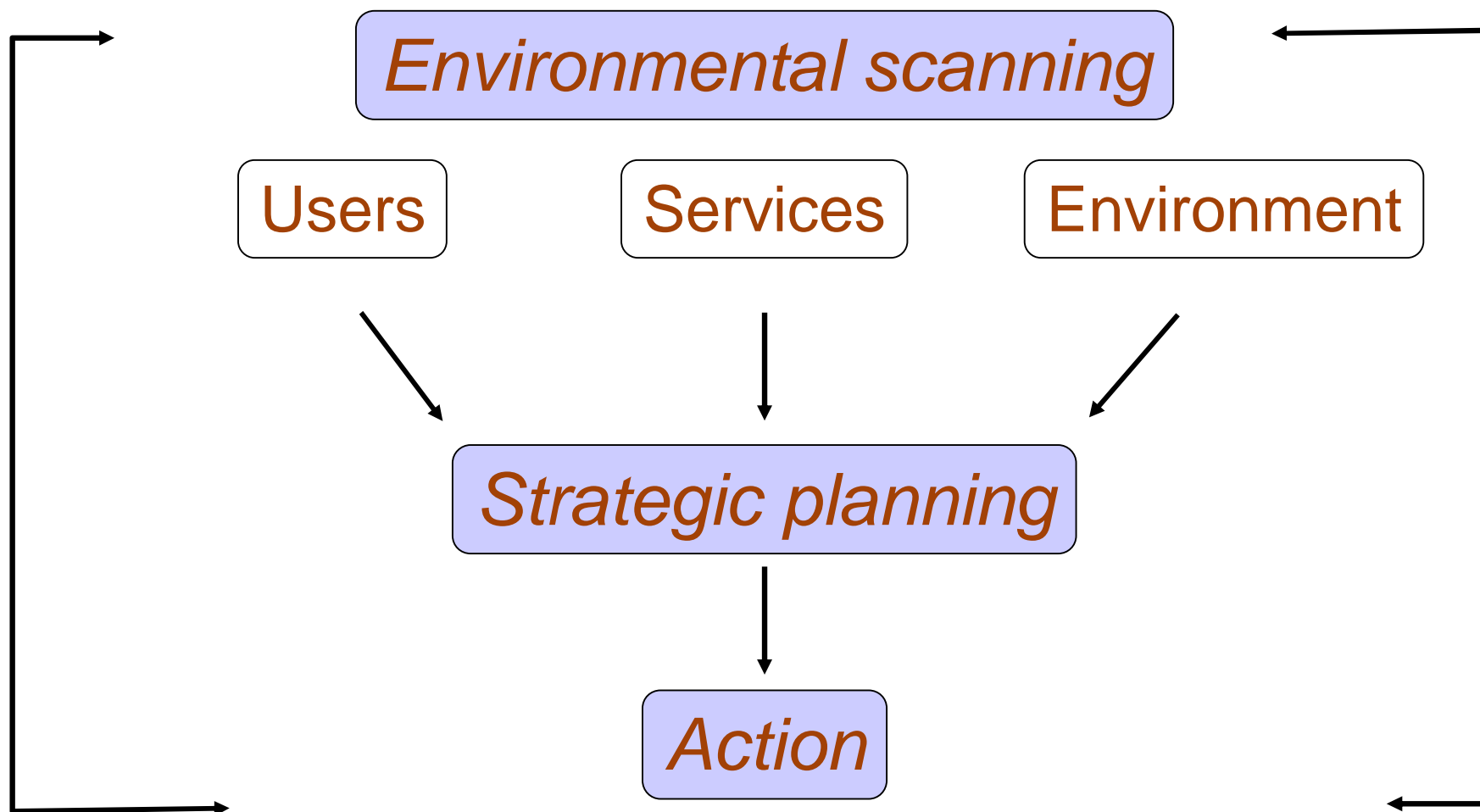
- ✓ Merging libraries
- ✓ Enhanced workforce (staff of 24 librarians)
- ✓ Management project
- ✓ Literature review according to EBLIP
Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice
- ✓ Reassuring the staff

Marketing Libraries

Definition of marketing according to Dinesh K. Gupta
(IFLA, 2006)

- ✓ Mindset
- ✓ Management style
- ✓ Set of techniques
- ✓ Customer focused approach

Marketing Backbone



Other Marketing-Related Activities

- ✓ Branding
- ✓ Public relations
- ✓ Promotional activities and special services
- ✓ Fundraising
- ✓ Evaluation



Literature Review

- ✓ Overabundance of documentation
- ✓ Scoring an existing bibliography

Marketing library resources:

An annotated bibliography

Daria Decooman (Elsevier, 2005)

Scoring Method

✓ Criteria:

- P: Libraries (P+ if academic)
- I: Any aspects of marketing
- O: Detailed methodologies / protocols / procedures

✓ Scale: 1 to 4

- 1 = No interest / outside the topic
- 2 = Low interest / theoretical only
- 3 = P+I+O- or P-I+O+
- 4 = P+I+O+

Selection of Relevant Papers

- ✓ Strong theoretical background
- ✓ Protocols, methodologies, guidelines
- ✓ ALA/ACRL Procedures
 - American Library Association
 - Association of College & Research Libraries

Initiated Research

Staff-centered approach

- ✓ Brainstorming (3h)
 - Introduction to context (merging)
 - 30 minutes – 2 questions – written answers
 - Discussion
- ✓ A questionnaire
 - 2 weeks – more focused questions
- ✓ Data retained for further analysis

Preliminary Results

Library internal assessment

- Missions
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Services : to improve, create & promote
- Customers : categories, subgroups, characteristics & needs as perceived by the staff

ALA Procedure

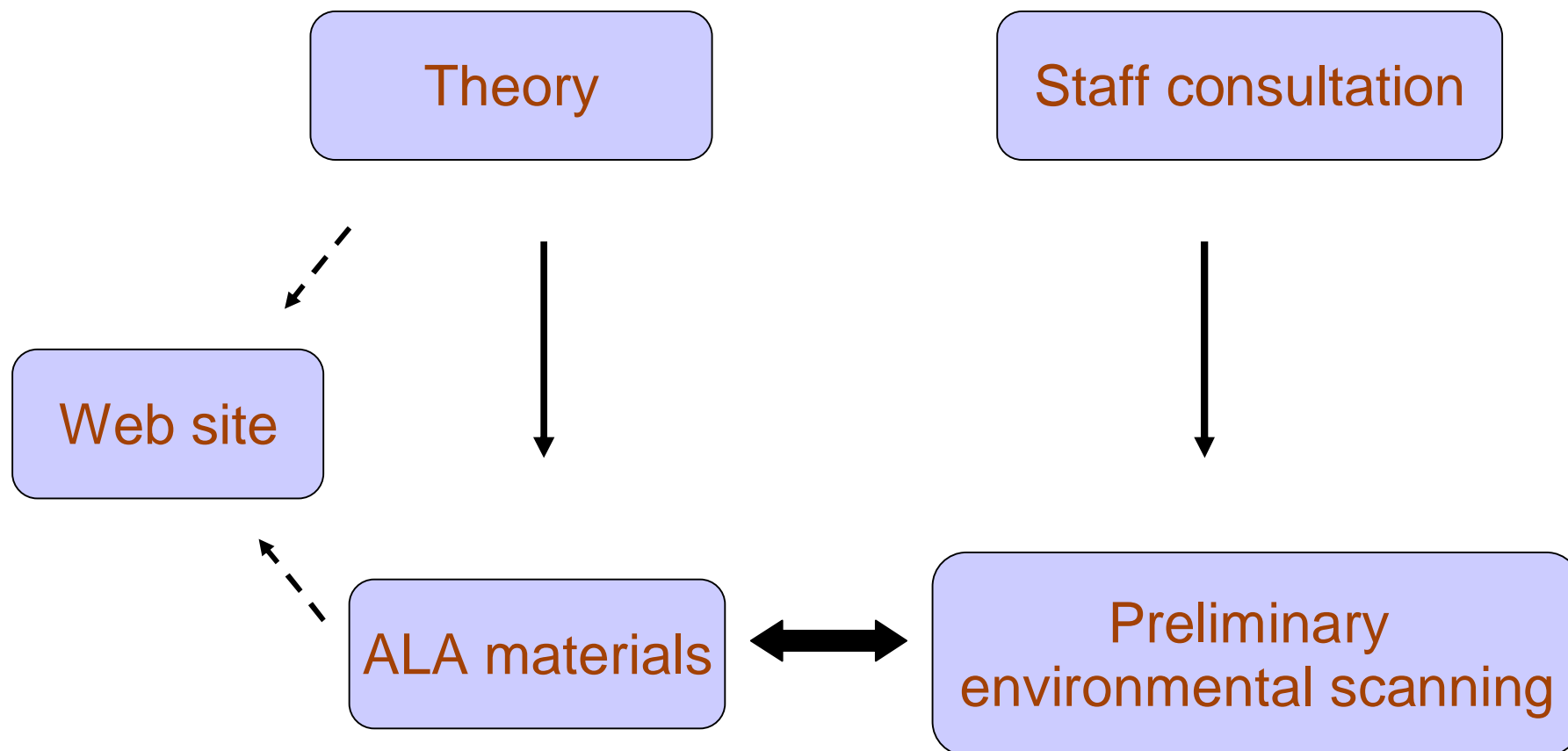
✓ 3 training options

- Working alone
- With a small leadership team
- With the whole staff ←

✓ *Marketing@yourlibrary*

- "Facilitator Guide"
- "Participant Manual"
- Guidelines, slides, grids & examples

To summarize



Conclusions (1)

- ✓ Modified perception of our library
- ✓ Staff-centered approach
 - Staff as decision makers
 - Staff as agents of change
- ✓ Strong relationship between marketing and human resources management

Conclusions (2)

- ✓ Strongly dedicated leaders & coordinators
 - Data collection & analysis & planning
- ✓ Financial resources
 - External audit
 - Promotional support
 - Adaptation of infrastructure
- ✓ Systematic feedbacks towards and from staff & users

*Marketing approach is something that will
not end!*

Thank you for your attention

*Nancy Durieux, Sandrine Vandenput, Christine
Brouwir, Nicolas Fairon, Françoise Pasleau*